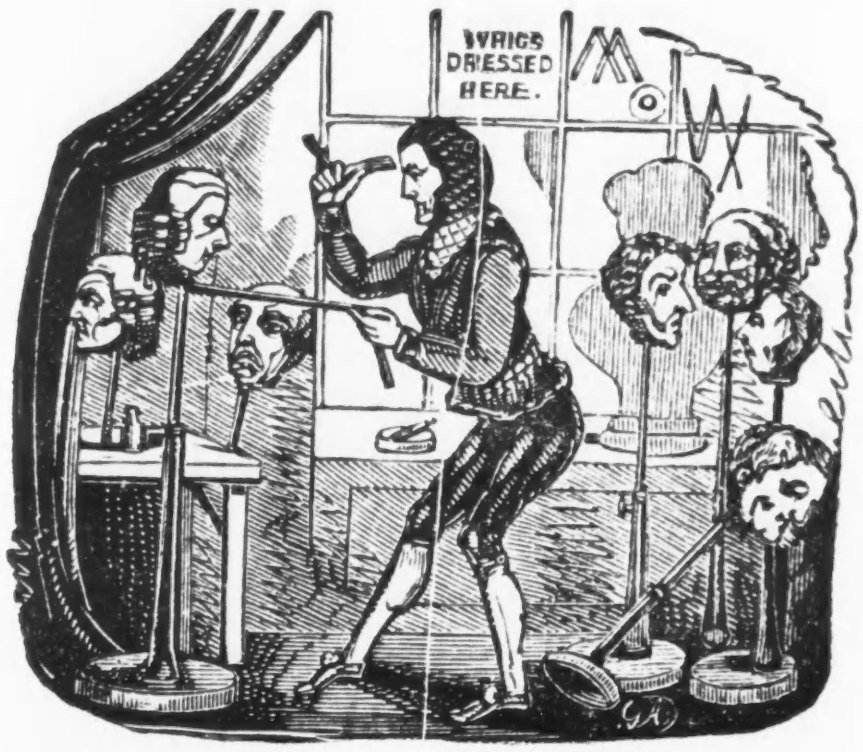
FIGARO IN LONDON.



Satire should like a polish'd razor keen,
Wound with a touch that's scarcely felt or seen.—LADY MONTAGUE.

"Political Pasquinades and Political Caricatures are parts (though humble ones,) of Political History. They supply information as to the person and habits often as to the motives and objects of public men, which cannot be found elsewhere."—CROKER'S NEW WHIG GUIDE.

No. 279. SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1837. Price One Penny

O'CONNELL, THE GRINDER.

We are indeed sorry to have to view O'Connell in the degrading light of a grinder, and more particular, in the shocking despicable position of grinding down the poor, of whom he has always been a professed advocate. We are always sorry to expose one whom the people have been in the habit of regarding as their friend; but we have a stern duty to perform, and we must perform it, however painful to our feelings. It has been our unpleasant task repeatedly to show up some of the principal political empirics, and though the tears of sorrow mix copiously with our ink, we are compelled to let both flow together. The liquid purity of the one, contrasting beautifully with the lumpy blackness of the other. The cause of our religious grief is to be found in the apostacy of O'Connell, who has shamefully deserted the cause of the poor, who have done so much for him, and he is now attempting to do for them in return, as speedily as possible. Our caricature represents O'Connell in the objectionable character of a grinder, and he appears in the act of grinding down one of the Irish poor—a process which he has most unmercifully attempted in the House of Commons, though he has not, as in the stern and rugged outline of our caricature, taken a patlander by the nose, and shoved him *per* force on to the grinding stone, still he has led them by the nose, and does force them on to the stone of oppression, and then he figuratively grinds, grinds, and grinds, till he has worn them away to worse than nothing. Our readers may probably be lost in the flowery labyrinth of our subtle dictim: but we shall be happy to assume the trifling part of Gower, on this occasion, and tell them what we do mean. We allude to the fact of O'Connell having moved as an amendment to the Irish Poor Law Bill, that all who employed Irish labourers, should be exempt from paying poor rates. By this process, he wants to throw the burden of supporting the poor on to the poor themselves—for all who are rich, and can afford to employ labourers, are not to pay anything towards keeping the poor; but those who cannot afford to employ labourers, which is a *prima facie* proof of any thing but abundant means, are to be the sole contributors to the poor rate. From this, it is clear O'Connell has been induced by his new Whig allies to enter into all the old arts of Whig chicanery, and that '*None of my child*,' is the adopted motto of the Irish patriot. The poor are knocked about from one side to the other, with the most complete indifference—and this too from O'Connell—*Et tu Brute*. This is indeed a fine return for 150,000*l.* made up to him by the poor, from sweat and copper. We trust that those who have been in the habit of paying tribute to O'Connell, will watch his acts, before they pull out their hard earned pennies, to lavish them on one who has had no other view than self-interest in affecting to feel for the wrongs

W. Strange, 21, Paternoster Row.

and oppression of poverty, So as they get enough to give him a penny out of it, no matter whether they half starve to pay it. We shall keep our eye, from time to time, not only upon this, but upon all other pseudo patriots.

LUGGING IN A PUFF.

Some extremely well meaning people, have invented a fire escape, by which people can get out of a four pair of stairs window, with ease and comfort, in case of a fire. This is all very nice as far as it goes, but the inventors have got a strange knack of using the apparatus on various occasions when there is no fire at all, and when *there is a fire* there is no getting hold of it. It has the peculiar advantage of swinging to and fro with singular violence, and knocking smartly on the head of the pedestrian that comes within six feet of it. In the day time, where *there has been a fire the night before*, the inventors come down to the spot with terrific zeal, when it is all over, and dangle the cumbersome machine in the air during the whole of the next day, to the immense detriment of the hats and heads of all who stop to admire it. We believe the gentlemen with the fire escape to be very well meaning, and, in some degree, ingenious folks; but we think, there is one little error in their system, which greatly interferes with its efficacy, and that is, that they never bring it till it is too late to be of the slightest service. They, however, like a puff, which is a very natural sort of predilection in persons who combine speculation with philanthropy, and therefore it is, that one of the *humane* parties interested, wrote a letter to the Editor of the *Morning Herald*, stating, that at the recent fire in Compton Street, Soho, they did not succeed in bringing their fire escape to the spot until *two days after*; but on their arrival, the fire had unfortunately been quite out for at least *eight and thirty hours*. This seems to be an awkward admission as to the promptitude of the aid to be derived from the fire escape; but the *humane* speculator goes on to remark, that 'Your readers will be glad to hear that having heard a report of fire three streets off, we hastened with the fire escape to the spot, and were there in sufficient time, as the report turned out to be a false one.' This is being too much the other way, but the inventors were determined the fire escape should not be useless, and so they got two old women to ride up and down in it, from the garret window to the pavement beneath, just to show how easy lives might be saved, if they were in any danger. The old women, who consented to be dragged up and down the house front in the fire escape, were about as extensive fools, as the old woman who rules the columns of the *Herald*, and who inserted such a truly flagrant puff as that which we have been crushing.

DRAMATIC MAGISTRATES.

The magistrates at the metropolitan police offices are very nice men indeed altogether, and are very knowing in giving their verdicts, winking at the policemen, and making jokes with their respective Hoblers, (for each office has its Hobler,) and it is a very nice sort of thing to be paid eight hundred pounds per annum for fribbling away the time of the public, and getting the best places to look at supposed murderers. We however most violently object to the dramatic manner in which they endeavour to '*get up*' any thing that comes under their cognisance. One would fancy that some of these fellows had an interest in the Sunday papers, for they contrive to give to every case of importance, that comes before them, as theatrical and as reportable a complexion as the circumstances will admit of. First there is a preliminary examination, to whet the public appetite; then there is a remand, and then, another remand, and another, before the final commitment, the grand aim appearing to be, to see how many good interesting reports can be got out of it. The case of Greenacre is a strong illustration of this system. The magistrates seem to play with criminals as cats do with mice. In truth, they seem in their proceedings to show more curiosity to hear all about it, than anxiety to act upon what they do hear. We, however, hope, that these hints may have a good effect, and that the magistrates will make justice a consideration—primary to the sale of the weekly newspapers

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

Something has been said about the idea of this piece having been given by Madame Vestris to Mr. Oxenford, she having taken the notion of it from some other production of the same title, that she did not think proper to bring out at her establishment. Now, from what we know of Madame Vestris, (and we know as much of her as most people,) we do not think her capable of doing any thing mean, or illiberal, towards any person, let him be an author, a performer, or a scene-shifter. We have heard that Mr. Oxenford never saw any piece upon this subject, and we believe he never did, for he is a gentleman of quite sufficient talent to get on easily enough, without pilfering from any other source, and particularly from *such a source* as that from which it is alledged he has derived hints for his new burletta. The only person from whom all the grumbling emanates, is a little man named Dalrymple, who fancies he is an author, because he did the doggerel of one of Yates's grand spectacles, called 'Lurline,' which succeeded solely owing to the lavish outlay gone to in producing it. Surely this unhappy little man never can suppose that his trash can in any shape have supplied *material* for any reasonable dramatist? He may have set down upon paper a number of sentences, and having tacked them altogether, called it the 'Rape of the Lock:' but it is indeed a heavy tax upon managers of theatres, that when they have a trashy piece sent in with a good title, they are to be debarred from using the piece of a clever dramatist because it happens to bear the same title. So if an ignorant scamp had written a piece called 'Othello,' we ought to have been deprived of Shakespeare's tragedy. But to bring the thing more home to our own times—suppose that, as doubtless is the case, a hundred empty scribblers may have written dramas they have called 'The Wife,' was Knowles's play to have been burked? Heaven forbid! And on the same principle, we are glad we have not been deprived of Mr. Oxenford's pleasant burletta, because Dalrymple has chosen to profane Pope, by seizing upon his title. For our parts, we don't believe the story, nor shall we till we have some better proof of it, than the angry and envious insinuations of a would be dramatist. We are, however quite open to conviction on either side.

THE EDGEWARE ROAD TRAGEDY.

It is not often that we interfere with subjects of a tragic kind; and we generally leave the delicate details of cut-throatery to the classic columns of the *Weekly Dispatch*, where picking pockets is treated as an art of civilization, while the New Police are assailed as the adversaries of all improvement, and a dead drag upon the commercial interests of the swell mob, the area sneaks, and all the other respectable patrons of the thieves' journal. We, however, cannot forbear touching upon the subject of the Edgeware Road affair, and upon the disgraceful conduct of the proprietors of several of the Sunday newspapers with regard to it. No sooner was Greenacre announced for re-examination, on Saturday last, than most of the Sunday newspaper proprietors besmeared the walls of the metropolis with the most filthy provocatives to public curiosity, respecting the affair, and purchasers were invited to feast on 'MURDER AND MUTILATION!' with other alliterative attractions, too sickening to insert in this chaste periodical. But this is not the worst of it. Had these people only pandered to a brutal taste for

horrors in the public mind, we might have passed the thing over as contemptible, though indicative of disgusting ferocity, on the part of newspaper speculators and their supporters; but when a base love of lucre drives men to denounce as guilty those who have never been proved so, it is time for the only honest corrector of public abuses (need we add, FIGARO) to stand forward. Placards on the walls promised to the public on Wednesday the 'full particulars of the examination of Greenacre, *the murderer;*' while some went so far as to advertise *his confession*. Can any thing be more brutal than, for the sake of gain, advertising as *a murderer* a man that has never been *proved so*, and to announce the *confession* of one who has given quite another account of the matter. Such an act we think deserves the severest punishment. It is the worst kind of libel, and cannot be too rigorously visited. It is teaching a brutal, ignorant, placard-reading, and murder-relishing mob, to regard a man as a murderer who may be innocent; and the result of this passing sentence on an individual without a trial is, that, as in the case of Greenacre, the savage mob are ready to tear him to pieces before his trial; and as every man is innocent till he is proved guilty, they, the mob, who wish *to do for him*, are ready to commit one murder to avenge another What makes the whole thing more distressing to us, and more truly sickening also, is, that it happens to be the *most liberal* newspapers (as they profess to be) that have distinguished themselves by their sanguinary placards and murderous posters. *The Dispatch*, *The Weekly True Sun*, and *The Sunday Times*, have particularly disgraced themselves by their inhuman traffic in the blood of a fellow creature; for such it is, if, for the sake of forcing the sale of their papers, they denounce a man as a murderer before his trial, and thus give him but little chance of ever being considered otherwise. As to Harmer and Bell, we know that crime is the very life and soul of their paper; and that without thieves and rogues, with a selection of dupes, their paper could neither be got up or purchased; but we are astonished at Whittle Harvey, who affects a character for liberality; we are, we say, astonished at his using *The Weekly True Sun* as a means of exciting popular indignation against a man in Greenacre's situation, against whom circumstances seem to press heavily enough, without adding the weight of uncharitableness, thrown, too, into the scale against him for mercenary purposes. The truth is, that the liberal press (*so called*) is not in right hands, and it is no more than a money-hunting concern, in which liberal principles are thrown in as being the most marketable. We have no opinion to give on the case of Greenacre; but we do say this, that we had rather give him the benefit of every possible doubt, than look through the medium of uncharitable exaggeration, at the sufficiently heavy mass of appearances, which, whether he be guilty or innocent, certainly seem to weigh against him.

BREVITIES.

Catching a Crab.

Advices from Rome tell us that the Pope has been suffering from a *cancer* in his face. We presume, from the presence of the *cancer* in his countenance, that it begins to show marks of *crabbed* old age.

Dash my Buttons.

The name of the Russian minister is a particularly queer one: he is called Monsieur *Butan off*. We are surprised that the Emperor of Russia should have a *Button-off*. He had better get it sewn on again with the utmost dispatch.

A Glass of Fashion.

Carpenter's Peerage for the People is different from a *Mirror* of Parliament, and may, from its faithful reflections, be called a *Pier Glass*.

On Fanny Kemble Butler's New Tragedy.

The star of Seville—that is strange—
From her last book it differs far;
For, if there's not a wond'rous change,
She is a most *un-Seville* (*uncivil*) *star!*

On Fanny Kemble's Book-Making.

When Fanny's volumes you peruse,
And read the slang that fills the book,
You think no *Butler* e'er could use
Language that would degrade a *Cook*.

Another.

In it no *Butler's* hand I trace—
Such ribaldry is *out of place*.

How to go to Sleep.

A Mr. Gardner advertises a method of producing sound and refreshing sleep. He refers to several ladies and gentlemen for testimonials. We do not exactly know what Mr. Gardner's principle may be, but we should imagine that he must recommend attendance in the House of Commons. We have seen sleep induced there in the most miraculous manner.

THEATRICALS.

Mrs. Wood has appeared as 'La Sonnambula,' at Drury Lane Theatre, and, though the experiment was a hazardous one, she may be said to have triumphantly succeeded. She is the only female English singer who can attempt to stand in the shoes of the late Malibran. Miss Romer, when she attempted to stand in the said shoes, found that to her they were complete *slippers*, and she was delighted to shuffle out of them. Mrs. Wood has gloriously maintained her ground, and we have reason to be proud of her. The press has not, however, done her full justice; and some part of it has positively had the indecent folly to talk of Miss Romer being superior to Mrs. Wood in the part of Amina. A *meaner* lie could not well have been uttered. Wilson threw a great deal of goose-like simplicity into the part of Elvino, which lost greatly by its being transferred to him from Templeton. Wilson is a most amiable ballad-singer, and a truly urbane executor of shakes on the smallest and simplest possible scale; but as to his being capable of singing the music of Bellini, we can only make a passing reference to one of our organs of sight and a female branch of the Martin family. Seguin's Count Rosambert is well known. His lament over the mill is worthy of the fancy;—it was a fine pugilistical effort. After the 'Sonnambula,' we had a new piece, called 'Hal's Early Days,' being from the inexhaustible soot-bag of the nightman of Catherine-street. We are surprised that Bunn should have allowed the sweep to shoot his rubbish on to the stage of Drury Lane Theatre. We know of course that he receives a consideration in the way of puffs, but we do think that, with the miserable circulation to which the *Age* has drivelled, the fulsome slime of its flattery is not worth paying for at any price. The manure supplied by the sweep, filthy as it is, will not make Bunn's ground more productive. 'Hal's Early Days' was damned, and his *early days* were his last. The thing was in two acts, and the audience, which hooted down the first, ferociously yelled off the second. We wonder that, after the experience of 'Nettlewig Hall,' the lessee liked to risk any thing else from the same source. Bunn is, however, sufficiently awake to expiate a crime as promptly as he commits one. 'Hal's Early Days' was played one night, but withdrawn on the second.

Covent Garden has been unable to maintain an inch of ground against the overwhelming attraction of Drury Lane; and the thundering rubbish, called 'Noureddin,' has been as brief in its career as the petticoats of Miss Vincent. As it has not *drawn* it is *with-drawn*, and there the matter rests for the present. Knowles has appeared in William Tell, which, with Macready in the theatre, strikes us as a piece of mountebankism and impudence which deserves the severest reprehension. His (Knowles's) Tell is bad enough when nobody else is by, but when Macready is in the house, who has made the part so powerful in the representation, it is as senseless as it is impertinent in Knowles to undertake to give his well-known burlesque version of the character. A new play, from Knowles's pen, is forthcoming, and, with Macready and Vandenhoff both in the house, we trust that he will not make himself such a consummate ass to put himself down for a part in it. Salmon seems to be very much at a discount, for wherever Farren can get a flying engagement of a night or two, Osbaldiston is very happy to let him go. It is strange that he should ever have been engaged any where, except to work in the team with other and better actors. Farren may be the only salmon, but Strickland and F. Mathews are both of them considerably beyond trout, and there are many who think them of a finer quality. The salmon is engaged at Vestris's for the next season, but we do not expect she will be able to do much with him. After all, he is a hard actor, with no feeling; and the salmon having any thing to do with *sole* (*soul*) is a thing that never was even suspected.

A new Theatre opened in Norton Falgate on Easter Monday; and as it is a very elegant and commodious Theatre, in a very large and profita-

ble neighbourhood, we should very much regret if an ill-judged parsimony were to destroy the prospects of success that might otherwise present themselves. Our reason for making this remark is, that the company seems to be as barren of respectability and ability as the lowest and most degraded of minor establishments. Williams and Wilkinson are the only two names in the whole company, and both of these (particularly the latter) have so much of the rust of antique mediocrity about them that we do not think they will be of the smallest service to the proprietor. The Theatre opened with a new drama, called the 'Pickwick Club,' which was very tolerably adapted from the papers of that name, but which, in their dramatic form, lost much of their effect from the poverty of talent which the company exhibited. The parts of Pickwick and Sam Weller, by Williams and Wilkinson, were the only adequate representatives of their characters; and even they were deficient in the qualities necessary to make them effective. Williams wanted the benevolence of the immortal Pickwick; while Wilkinson made Sam Weller a sort of omnibus cad, instead of a wide-awake and not inelegant wisdom. The other characters were, almost without an exception, ill played; and the last piece, called the 'Ancestress,' was about as ill-written a concoction of horrors upon horror's heads accumulated as could have been presented to a ferocious public. Mr. Cockerton will soon find the error of penny wisdom and pound foolishness. The bottom of the bills promises new engagements of some importance, but as none are named (with the exception of Mr. Rice), we shall wait patiently for the fulfilment of the managerial promise before we give him credit for any thing extraordinary.

The Minors have been, we understand, ill attended during the week, and on Monday neither of them produced a novelty, but Yates, who plunged into the Pickwick Papers; but from that fruitful fund of every thing rich, racy, and dramatic, the adapter by his want of ingenuity or want of time (we don't know which) has failed in producing a good acting drama. We think that nothing could have been better chosen for dramatic effect than these inimitable papers; but we wish Boz himself had taken the trouble of dramatising those magnificent scenes, which none but himself ought to be allowed to interfere with. It is a profanation for any one to touch what, it is allowed by all, that there is no approaching. The acting was, in many parts, good—Reeve's Weller was, however, coarse. We think Hammond would make the best Weller; but he, having been forestalled by the Adelphi in the production of the piece, seems to have relinquished the idea of bringing it out. Buckstone's Jingle was the best bit in the piece. This excellent actor is fast ousting John Reeve, and is stealing gradually up to the top of his profession. We very much reprehend the introduction of Jim Crow. Boz would never have designed such an unmeaning individual. The piece, owing to this kind of thing, or one or two other little matters of equally bad taste, experienced a great deal of opposition at the conclusion. If they would get the 'Papers' closer together, and cut out much of the extraneous matter, we see no cause why the 'Peregrinations of Pickwick' should not become extremely popular.

Astley's has commenced its season not quite so auspiciously as on former occasions. He has, however, entered into an arrangement with that splendid old codger, the Emperor of Morocco, with thirteen Philistines. The daily critics don't seem much pleased with these Philistines, and assail them with the same weapon—the jaws of asses. We think it a little *infra dig.* for an Emperor to arrange with a theatre for the engagement of mountebanks; but if William the Fourth could be prevailed upon to do such a thing, and if any manager would pay any thing for such utterly worthless animals, we think that the King has plenty of political mountebanks that might be let out to exhibit. If they could be made profitable in that way, there would be something advantageous in it. We wish the Emperor of Morocco would consent to an exchange of mountebanks, and let us ship off our Bishops and a Lord or two, in return for his troop of evolutionists. We shall go and see these Philistines, and report progress.

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